1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OFS Alor OFS

It is forty miles over the
port of Kalabahi on the western bay to Kolana on the east coast, but by pushing himself a native can walk the distance in some four days. The usual time allowed by officials on horseback is five. It does not seem improbable, therefore, that linguistic variation has been fostered by the difficulty of communication.

Culturally too, changes grade from one into the other as one passes from village to village. The only sharp demarcations are between the ten thousand coastal Mohammedans and the pagan mountain peoples of the interior. These two groups hold each other in mutual distrust and fear. At the end of the nineteenth century Chinese merchants began trading on the coast. After the arrival of the first Dutch official in about 1908 coastal men have been designated as radjahs by the Dutch and have been given control over the interior. This control was only gradually extended and was considered by the Hollanders still to be in process, since Malay is not yet widely known in the interior and taxes are still reluctantly paid. Prior to the Hollanders' arrival no such areas of political organization existed; social control centered about kin and village groups. Certainly the coastal people exercised no power over the mountain population, despite brisk trade contacts at stipulated market places.

At present the island is divided into four radjahships: Alor proper (including the islands of Pura and Pantar), Kui, Barattang, and Kolana. These political divisions cut across both culture and language. Under each radjah are kapitans who, with the assistance of a handful of field police, administer smaller districts. The principal functions of the radjahs and kapitans are collecting taxes and hearing litigations. A chief called the kepala (Malay for head) has been appointed for these tasks in each village, and groups of friendly villages have been unified under a headman called a tumukung. This hierarchy is a Dutch innovation, but it has been quite heartily accepted by the native population, with whom it functions successfully. The system of litigation, however, has been far more completely accepted than the system of taxation.

The government of the Netherlands East Indies is represented by a civil administrator of controleur rank and by a military authority of lieutenant's rank in charge of a garrison of some seventy Indonesian troops. Two or three patrols of fifteen men are constantly on the move through the island, often cutting across the most difficult terrain and always without announcing their route of travel. In addition there is a military doctor, who is responsible for the health of the entire population. He has a hospital in Kalabahi and a small corps of Indonesian assistants with limited training.